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Letter dated 8 November 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

On instruction from my Government, I have the honour to transmit a letter dated 22 October 2007 from His Excellency President Ernest Bai Koroma to the Secretary-General on the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (see annex). I would like to request that the present letter and its annex be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Joe R. **Pemagbi**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 8 November 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

As the two-year mandate of the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL), established under Security Council resolution 1620 (2005) of 31 August 2005, expires at the end of December 2007, I write to share my Government's views on the situation in Sierra Leone and the presence of the United Nations in the country.

I am pleased to inform you that UNIOSIL has played an important role in the past two years in the peace consolidation process in Sierra Leone, as mandated by the Security Council. Among the achievements made with the political and substantive support of UNIOSIL, I wish to highlight the just concluded parliamentary and presidential elections, which every national and international observer considered highly credible. Moreover, UNIOSIL provided and continues to provide critical support in other major post-conflict areas, such as the strengthening and reform of the security and justice sectors, facilitating inter-party dialogue and confidence-building, establishing the national human rights commission, following up of the implementation of the recommendations of the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, deepening the decentralization process and promoting the participation of women. It has also played a pivotal role in ensuring an effective engagement of Sierra Leone with the Peacebuilding Commission and Peacebuilding Fund and in providing a forum for policy dialogue and overall coordination between the Government and its international partners.

Notwithstanding the progress made over the past two years and the success achieved by UNIOSIL, many critical challenges still remain, which are very central for the completion of the stabilization and democratic processes, as well as for addressing fundamental questions of national reconciliation and political tolerance. The outcome of the recently concluded elections have once again demonstrated the need for further tangible progress in addressing the underlying causes of the conflict, including in the areas of governance reform and accountability, better functioning of key democratic institutions, such as parliament, enhancing the rule of law, promoting sustainable economic development and ensuring greater national cohesion.

In this regard, included among the specific tasks to be undertaken by my Government in the coming year are the ongoing revision of the 1991 Constitution, strengthening of the decentralization process and expansion of State administration at the local level, including the conduct of local government elections, enhancing anti-corruption measures, promoting public sector reforms and further enhancing the capacity and professionalism of the national security agencies. Engagement with the Peacebuilding Commission and the development and implementation of an integration peacebuilding strategy are also priority undertakings. My Government is committed to providing the necessary policy framework and national leadership towards achieving these objectives.

However, progress and successful implementation of the above-mentioned priority tasks would require the continued engagement and support of the international community, not only as development partners, but also within the peacebuilding and consolidation processes. For this reason, the continued political

presence of the United Nations in 2008, represented by a high-level official, as has been the case, is most necessary.

I am therefore requesting, and through you the Security Council, that the presence of the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone be extended, as currently structured, and with the same institutional link with the Secretariat, through the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, for a further one year after the end of December 2007.